

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 1397
By: White
Elections
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Recent elections have highlighted the need to protect election integrity and increase transparency regarding the storage of voted ballots. There have been calls for the state to require the disclosure of any entities that have an ownership interest in voting system equipment acquired by counties for use in elections. H.B. 1397 seeks to answer those calls by requiring a contract to acquire voting system equipment from a vendor to identify each person or entity that has an ownership interest in the vendor.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

H.B. 1397 amends the Election Code to require a contract for a county to acquire voting system equipment from a vendor to identify each person or entity that has a five percent or greater ownership interest in the vendor and, if applicable, the vendor's parent company and each subsidiary or affiliate of the vendor. This requirement applies only to equipment acquired on or after September 1, 2021.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2021.